

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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POLICY

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Nile Nuggets for October 2014

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Agriculture in the News

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Report Highlights:

Farmers up in arms about fertilizer price hikes; wheat support price to be unchanged and how about some
koshary?

Nile Nuggets

*News on Developments in Agriculture and Food in Egypt
October 2014*

FARMERS CONTEST NEW FERTILIZER PRICES: In October 2014, the government raised the price of urea fertilizers from LE1, 500/ton (\$210/ton) to LE2, 000/ton (\$280/ton) while the prices of nitrate fertilizers went up to LE1, 900/ton (\$266/ton). Not surprisingly, the decision has received widespread criticism from farmers but strong approval from fertilizer producers. The farmers syndicate announced its rejection of this increase accusing the Egyptian Government of protecting businessmen but not defending farmers' interests. The Syndicate said that previous prices were already too high, and farmers often complained about these prices. Still, Egypt's agricultural producers indicate they can accept these new prices on condition that the government also increases procurement prices for their crops. On the other hand, fertilizer producers welcomed the decision describing it as encouraging and one of the main steps that needed to be taken in order to solve the fertilizer production problem in the wake of the government's decision in July 2014 that raised the natural gas price for fertilizer production.

PROCUREMENT PRICES FOR WHEAT CROP THE SAME: The government has committed to purchase wheat production to be harvested in 2015 at \$394/ton. Over the recent past, The Egyptian Government's policy has frequently been to set procurement pricing at levels higher than international prices to encourage local producers to increase area planted with wheat. Egypt's new constitution obliges the government to support farmers by buying their strategic crops at competitive prices. In 2013/2014, Egypt's public sector wheat imports by the Ministry of Supply's General Administration of Supply Commodities (GASC) were 5.46 million tons to go along with purchases of 3.7 million tons of local wheat which are used to produce the subsidized baladi bread.

KOSHARY: Is an Egyptian dish of rice, macaroni and lentils mixed together, topped with a tomato-vinegar sauce. Some add short pieces of spaghetti garnished with chickpeas and crispy fried onions. A sprinkling of garlic juice and hot sauce are optional as well. Koshary originated in the mid-19th century during a time when Egypt was a multi-cultural country and the economy was booming. Koshary is widely popular among workers and laborers. It is prepared at home but is readily found at roadside stalls and restaurants all over Egypt. Some restaurants specialize in koshary to the exclusion of other dishes, while others feature it as an item among many.

